GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(The National Geographic Society is a scientific and educational Society, wholly altruistic, incorporated as a non-commercial institution for the increase of geographic knowledge and its popular diffusion. General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.)

Contents for Week of October 27, 1941. Vol. XX. No. 16.

1. Bible Land of Syria Proclaimed Independent Republic
2. Electricity the Third Hand of Man
3. Chapultepec Palace Sees Turbulent Mexican History
4. Sacred Feast of Ramadan Observed by Moslem World
5. France Reinstates Provinces of 150 Years Ago

Photograph by V. Derounian

OLD CUSTOMS SURVIVE NEW GOVERNMENTS IN SYRIA

Under Turkish rule until the World War, then turned over to France as a mandate by the League of Nations, Syria preserves many old traditions because they represent a good adjustment to the environment. Wood is scarce; so houses are built of sun-dried brick coated with clay, though the bullet-shaped roofs make homes resemble beehives. Instead of recording a transfer of title when a mule is sold, the buyer and seller shake hands before witnesses in a public street. This beehive village is one of a number on the North Syrian Plain between Antioch and Alep (Aleppo). Now Syria, as a newly proclaimed republic, has its first president (Bulletin No. 1).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

The Geographic School Bulletins are published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers in the United States and its possessions for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (stamps or money order); in Canada, 50 cents. Entered as second-class matter, Jan. 27, 1922, Post Office, Washington, D. C., under act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of Oct. 3, 1917, authorized Feb. 9, 1922. Copyright, 1941, by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C. International copyright secured. All rights reserved. Quedan reservados todos los derechos.

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Bible Land of Syria Proclaimed Independent Republic

A SHEIK has become president of the country where King Hiram of Tyre sold cedar timber to King Solomon, where wily Queen Zenobia ruled the city-state of Palmyra, and King Og held sway over Bashan. After Free French forces and British allies had taken over the French mandate of Syria, in September, 1941, they proclaimed the country a republic under a native president. Now the United States is investigating American rights under the new regime. A treaty signed in 1924 by France and the United States calls for consultation with the United States before any change in the status of the Syrian mandate.

This region of French supervision in the Middle East, commonly called Syria, is organized officially as the Levant States, consisting of the four separate states of Syria, Latakia, Lebanon, and Jebel Ed Druz. The whole territory, about the size of Michigan or Wisconsin, closes the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, with Turkey on the north, the oil fields of Iraq on the east, and Palestine and Trans-Jordan on the south.

Food Supply Usually Insufficient

The Levant, which means literally "the rising" and by implication the "Sunrise Land," furnishes odd contrasts of rocky sea coast, snow-capped mountains, fertile valleys, and inland desert. Fruit trees, date palms, and olives grow in abundance in the well-watered areas, while Bedouins tend herds on the desert's edge. Wheat is the principal agricultural product, but ordinarily not enough is raised to supply the 3,600,000 people.

The food shortage is a sample of the difficulties France has had while administering the region for the last two decades under a League of Nations mandate. The Arab Nationalist movement, working for an independent nation free of French supervision, has caused much unrest, so that French troops in peace times set up sandbags and machine guns in the winding streets of Damascus, often called the world's oldest living city.

Although primarily Moslem, the people of the Levant States consist of several racial strains. Some are descended from Phoenician navigators who spread the alphabet throughout Mediterranean lands, or from Saracens who fought off the Crusaders of the Middle Ages. Some are Christians, some Jews. Some live as nomads, others in primitive villages of strange "beehive" huts (illustration, cover), or in the flat-roofed houses of stone blocks which crowd the coastal towns.

Solomon Used Cedars of Lebanon

Lebanon, whose ancient cedars King Solomon bought for his temple at Jerusalem, covers the southern coastal area of the Levant. It is dominated by Beyrouth (Beirut), the richest and busiest port and home of the noted American University. To the north is Tripoli (not to be confused with Tripoli in Libia), where oil from one fork of the Iraq pipe line is brought to silvery storage tanks. Also on the coast are the Biblical towns of Saida (Sidon) and Sour (Tyre), while inland is Baalbek, where massive ruins of Roman temples rise from the fertile plain. One Arab legend says that Baalbek was founded by Cain. Specimens of Lebanon's famous cedar tree, which is depicted on the Lebanese flag, were sent to the United States to be planted in Arlington National Cemetery, south of Washington, D. C.

Along the seashore north of Lebanon is the Republic of Latakia, opposite the

UMI

Photograph by W. Robert Moore

WHERE ABRAHAM WALKED BESIDE OLD TESTAMENT FLOCKS, MODERN SHEPHERDS RIDE IN AMERICAN AUTOMOBILES

When modern inventions within his reach appear to be an improvement, the Syrian welcomes them. Once the nomadic Bedouin followed his grazing flocks along the fringes of Syria's stony desert interior on foot, or on a slow swaying camel, with mules or horses for shorter trips. Now he can move his family from place to place in American automobiles. But for shelter so far nothing has proved an improvement on the lightweight, airy, easily moved tents of black goat hair (right background). This flock, photographed east of Aleppo, belongs to a Bedouin tribe that owns 100,000 sheep and almost 20,000 camels. That earlier shepherd, Abraham, led his flocks and family into Syria (Bulletin No. 1).

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Electricity the Third Hand of Man

HOW intimately electricity enters into man's daily life has been shown dramatically in recent months when enemy bombs have blasted the power plants of besieged cities in Europe. The lesson was brought closer home recently when a master switch was thoughtlessly thrown to cut off all current in Kansas City, and the place became indeed a "City of Dreadful Night."

Then Americans could visualize why, during the two years of black-out in Britain, the loss of life in highway accidents has been double the loss due to enemy action.

Electricity Guards Supply of Air, Food, and Water

In the blacked-out streets of Kansas City, danger was as thick as the darkness. With no street lights for illumination and no traffic lights for guidance, traffic was paralyzed. Pedestrians had no protection at intersections. Street cars were motionless. Filling station pumps, powered by electricity, were unable to deliver gasoline to automobile tanks.

Operations under way in the hospitals were plunged into darkness, and had to be finished by flickering candlelight. Patients depending on "artificial lungs" operated by electric motors (illustration, next page) were threatened with suffocation until emergency hand pumps could be put to work. Treatments using ultraviolet rays or infrared rays were interrupted, and X-ray work was suspended.

Fire protection also was suspended. Fire-alarm boxes could not operate without current to signal to the fire companies.

Burglar alarms, which go into noisy action when an electric circuit is broken, were all set off by the power stoppage.

The city recognized suddenly that electricity affected those prime essentials for life—air, food, and water. Air-conditioning units stopped supplying fresh cool air to warehouses, shops, hotels, and homes. The refrigerators in hospitals, shops, dairies, meat stores, bakeries, and homes relaxed their perpetual cool vigilance that keeps food from spoiling and endangering the health of the consumers. The city's water supply was threatened, when the giant electric pumps stopped pushing water into the reservoirs from which it is sent through mains and pipes.

Suspended Animation in Electrical Homes

Factories and plants working the night shift on defense orders found their light and power stopped. The essential uses of electricity in these industries included the heating of furnaces for molten steel; stoppage of power allowed the furnaces to cool and the metal to harden.

When the electric lights were blacked out, the electric clocks stopped, and the radio was silenced for lack of electric current, many homes fell into a disorganized state of "suspended animation." If the black-out had continued for many hours the inconveniences would have been multiplied. With water supply uncertain and ice cubes in dead refrigerators dwindling, with food subject to spoiling and electric stoves out of commission, the regular schedule of meals would have been threatened. Many cooks would have been hampered without electric toasters, percolators, fruit-juicers, or cake-mixers. Household chores would have been at a standstill for the women who depended on electric sewing machines, vacuum sweepers, washing

UMI

British island of Cyprus. Rising sharply from the sea, the land falls to the east in terraces. Harbors are limited because the coast has few indentations.

Jebel Ed Druz, little larger than the State of Delaware, appears like a thumbprint in the southernmost corner of the Levant States, with Syrian territory on three sides. Its population numbers 50,000. Extinct volcanoes, some more than a mile high, show how the region was blanketed with rich lava soil, where now abundant crops of wheat and other grains make this a potential granary to feed the starving Levant. Soueida (Es-Suweida), the capital, is a mountain town of 5,000. The Druses, a warrior people for whom Jebel Ed Druz was set up and named, combine the religions of Christ, Moses, and Mohammed with assorted pagan beliefs.

Syria proper, with more than 1,500,000 residents, covers the bulk of the interior. Damascus, the Syrian capital, still has the celebrated bazaars that have made it picturesque for centuries, but western products are intruding. The same holds true of Alep (Aleppo), in the north, which tradition says was visited by Abraham and named for his dappled cow. Near the center of the country is Tadmor (Palmyra), to which Queen Zenobia brought ancient fame. Now the old city is in ruins, and Arabs live there in a collection of hovels.

Note: The Map of the Bible Lands, which can be obtained from the National Geographic Society's headquarters in Washington, D. C., shows the Levant States and their modern developments, including pipe lines and bus routes. Ancient sites and travels of Biblical characters are depicted in insets on the Map.

Articles on Syria which have appeared in the *National Geographic Magazine* include: "Change Comes to Bible Lands," December, 1938; "Road of the Crusaders," December, 1933; "Secrets from Syrian Hills," July, 1933; "Crusader Castles of the Near East," March, 1931; and "A New Alphabet of the Ancients Is Unearthed," October, 1930.

See also the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS for December 16, 1940, for the article, "French-Governed Levant States, 'Sunrise Land' of History."

Bulletin No. 1, October 27, 1941.

Photograph by W. Robert Moore

TODAY'S TRAVELER IN SYRIA CAN WALK IN 2,000-YEAR-OLD ROMAN FOOTSTEPS

The good highways and railways crossing Syria have models of durability in the stone-paved roads built by Roman conquerors of this eastern Mediterranean region twenty centuries ago. Roman engineers chose a good road bed; modern builders followed the same route in spots. Ruins of cities and temples in the Levant States suggest that the population in Roman times was higher than it is now. Beyond the area of Roman road-building, highways now cross the deserts where caravan trails once brought silks, perfumes, and incense from the Orient.

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Chapultepec Palace Sees Turbulent Mexican History

ANOTHER scene in Mexico's dramatic history has been enacted against the backdrop of Chapultepec Palace and its spacious surrounding park. In a clash between Mexican troops and a group of aggrieved workers marching to the near-by suburban home of President Camacho, a number of workmen were killed. Thousands of Mexicans massed to bury them as martyrs.

Chapultepec Park today (illustration, next page) is a popular resort in the suburb of Mexico City (Mexico, D. F.). There families can picnic and listen to Sunday morning band concerts, old gentlemen can take leisurely walks along gravel roads, and young men with their girls glide in row boats over little lakes.

"Grasshopper Hill" Was Site of Human Sacrifice

The castle, imperial residence in the 1860's of the ill-fated Emperor Maximilian and his Empress Carlotta, has become a national museum, whose furnishings and exhibits recall not only the varied story of the palace and its environs but much of the history of Mexico itself.

The 200-foot elevation on which the modern castle stands was occupied in early times by the empire-building Aztecs, who named it Chapultepec, or "Grasshopper Hill," because of the infesting insects. Using the heights also as a fortress, they built there a temple in which they practiced rites of human sacrifice.

Before Cortés and his Spaniards reached there, the last monarch of the Aztecs, Montezuma II, had turned the old fortress into a summer home, complete with gardens, baths, hunting lodge, and harem. The Spaniards found an aqueduct bringing abundant fresh water from the springs of Chapultepec to a city reservoir.

Today's Chapultepec Palace had its beginning in 1783, when the Spanish viceroy laid the foundation for a suburban residence overlooking Mexico City. The castle was fortified not long before the United States-Mexican War of 1846-48. In this war, the castle was damaged in its first and only battle, an assault by United States troops against Mexican cadet defenders.

Mexican Versailles of Maximilian and Carlotta

It was nearly two decades later that Chapultepec witnessed the tragic episode of the rule of the Austrian Archduke Maximilian. Promoted to the position of Emperor of Mexico as a result of Napoleon III's ambition for French expansion overseas, Maximilian rebuilt and renovated the palace for the use of himself and his beautiful wife, Charlotte, who became "Carlotta" to the Mexicans. With her help, he turned Chapultepec into a second Versailles, with the castle decorated and furnished after the lavish French style of the time, and its gardens terraced and landscaped in rich, formal designs.

The influence of these European monarchs, whose turbulent reign from 1863 to 1867 ended in the execution of Maximilian and the return of Carlotta to Europe, is still strongly evident at Chapultepec.

For many years the palace was the official Mexican White House. During the term of President Cardenas, it was made into a national museum.

Note: Articles which contain references to Chapultepec Park, with illustrations, include: "Great Stone Faces of the Mexican Jungle," *National Geographic Magazine*, September, 1940; "Modern Progress and Age-Old Glamour in Mexico," December, 1934; "In the Empire of the Aztecs," June, 1937; and "North America's Oldest Metropolis" (Mexico, D. F.), July, 1930.

UMI

machines and ironers. Current-less electric razors would have sent many men unshaven to their offices.

And it would have been dangerous to try to escape from the temporary "City of Dreadful Night" by air, for airplanes lacked the lights and signals of the airport for guidance.

Skyscraper hotels and office buildings were crippled by the darkness, the threat of insufficient water, and dead elevators. The volume of elevator traffic in the modern city, all depending on electricity, is, however, best demonstrated in New York, where the up-and-down travel exceeds the horizontal. Elevators there carry more passengers than all the subways, street cars, busses, and automobiles.

The use of electricity throughout the United States is growing. The demand for power during the summer of 1941 was nearly 20 per cent above that of the previous year.

Each individual in the United States makes use of a yearly average of 994 kilowatt hours. The demand is higher in the congested industrial areas around New York, where the average is 1,144 kilowatt hours, and the Middle Atlantic States, where it is 1,182. The per capita use is lowest in the Texas area (533 kilowatt hours). These figures represent not the individual's personal use of electricity, but the per capita average based on each region's total consumption for all purposes—industrial, municipal, and domestic. These purposes vary from the beauty parlor's need for permanent-waving, the church's need for electrically operated pipe organs, and the electrified railways, to electric irrigation pumps.

Bulletin No. 2, October 27, 1941.

"ELECTRIC BREATHING" CAN SAVE THE LIFE OF INFANTILE PARALYSIS VICTIMS

When the disease paralyses the muscles used in breathing, a respirator can keep the patient's lungs operating by pressure applied from outside. The usual form of respirator is a metal tank in which the patient lies on a mattress, with only his head protruding, but this lighter-weight mechanism of rubber, developed by the General Tire and Rubber Company, is now being tried out. When air is pumped into the respirator, the increased air pressure on the patient's chest collapses the lungs; when air is pumped out, the chest and lungs expand, and breath fills the lungs. An electric motor operates it. The first sufferer to try out the rubber "lung" was this six-year-old patient in a hospital at Windsor, Ontario.

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Sacred Fast of Ramadan Observed by Moslem World

SOME 250,000,000 Mohammedans around the globe pushed the world's wars and other problems temporarily into the background while they observed their most sacred season, the fast of Ramadan. Even those in conflict zones carried out the required abstinence.

The fast began with the new moon which, on September 21, ushered in Ramadan, the ninth month of the Mohammedan calendar. The Moslem year is a lunar one, divided according to the moon's revolutions. The fast is held from new moon to new moon, a period of a little more than 29 days, 12 hours.

Commemorates Mohammed's Sufferings as He Received Koran's Teachings

The month of Ramadan is sacred to followers of Mohammed as the time when, they believe, the divine doctrines of the Koran (the Moslem Bible) first were handed down to the prophet. From dawn to dark, during that period, adult Mohammedans everywhere must abstain from all eating, drinking, smoking, and even such pleasures as the smelling of flowers or perfumes. In the words of the Koran, the fast day begins at the moment before sunrise when one can distinguish a black from a white thread and lasts until sunset.

Every Mohammedan except soldiers in wartime, sick people, travelers, or others who would suffer unduly must take part in the Ramadan fast. Even those who are excepted are required to undergo later fasts. More pious Moslems often shut themselves away from the world during Ramadan and spend their time reading the Koran and praying. For others, the non-fast hours of darkness become a time of ceremonial feasts. At the end of the Ramadan period, when the next new moon appears, there is a super-celebration that is somewhat like the gayest of New Year's parties in the western world.

The New Moon Brings Ramadan

By long-established custom, the fast of Ramadan opens when two reliable witnesses have seen the new moon of the ninth month. A world traveler, who once joined the pilgrimage to the sacred Moslem shrines of Arabia, described this occasion in a communication to the National Geographic Society:

"That day was the eve of Ramadan. All the good folk of Jidda were waiting for word that the young moon had been seen. . . . Through the stillness of the night the roar of the Ramadan salvo of guns was heard from the harbor fort. The sickle moon of the month had been seen by some keen Arab eye a thousand miles away, in the desert of Nejd. The good news had at once been borne to the King at his ancestral capital in Nejd; thence it had been relayed by wireless to Mecca. . . . So the fast would begin at tomorrow's dawn."

Omar Khayyam, in the *Rubaiyat,* refers to the moon of Ramadan when writing of the allegorical conversation between clay vessels fresh from the potter's wheel:

"So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
The little moon look'd in that all were seeking. . . ."

The millions of Mohammedans observing Ramadan are found in every continent. The bulk of them live in the Middle East and North Africa (illustration, next page), but there are additional millions in the Far East, the Balkan states, and the islands of the Pacific, as well as groups in the Western Hemisphere.

UMI

Photograph by James Sawders

MONTEZUMA'S PLAYGROUND BECAME A BATTLEGROUND FOR ROBERT E. LEE AND STONEWALL JACKSON

Chapultepec, or "Grasshopper Hill," outside Mexico City was a summer home of the last Aztec ruler, Montezuma II. The hill's plentiful springs supplied water by aqueduct to the Aztec capital. But Chapultepec was a fortress and military academy when war broke out between the United States and Mexico in 1846. The two days of fighting for this strategic hill on the approaches to Mexico City, September 12-13, 1847, brought into action several young U. S. soldiers who became famous during the Civil War—Robert E. Lee, Joseph E. Johnston, James Longstreet, Stonewall Jackson, Beauregard, McClellan, and Pickett. Among the Mexican defenders were forty cadets enrolled in the military school. The capture of Chapultepec, after which the U. S. forces marched into Mexico City, brought the fighting to an end.

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France Reinstates Provinces of 150 Years Ago

FROM Burgundy to Languedoc, from Artois to Provence, France is putting storybook names back on the map again. The Vichy Government (ruling that part of the nation not occupied by German forces) has started to sweep away France's modern division into 90 departments and set up again the old provinces of the extinct French monarchy. Already provincial governors have been appointed.

Among the debris of monarchy which the French Revolution cleared away by law and guillotine were the patchwork boundaries of some 35 or 40 ancient provinces and their semi-feudal ruling counts, dukes, and princes. In 1790 the French Constitution smashed the old provincial framework into 83 fragments known as departments; later additions brought the number to 90. Departments bear the prosaic names of rivers or some other geographic feature. Glamorous Paris, for example, stands in a department—the smallest of them all—named for the Seine. Since the departments were set up, many a reader of French history or novels has searched the map in vain for Brittany, Gascony, Dauphiné, Flanders, or Picardy.

Old Names Reflect History, Not Geography

The historic provinces were carved out by battle, civil war, sale, marriage, and assassination, in the 900 years between Charlemagne's rule and their abolition in 1790. They were the legacy of generations of battling Dukes of Burgundy, high-handed Bourbons who gave France the Revolution, princely Dukes of Orleans who gave France in 1830 her last king, the Black Prince of Guyenne, and numberless other feudal lords jostling for power and income.

The largest provinces in the north were Brittany, Normandy, Ile de France, and Champagne. King Arthur's defeated Britons fleeing from England before Anglo-Saxon invaders brought Brittany its name and language, and the province was ruled by its own duke, separate from the rest of France, until the 15-year-old Duchess of Brittany in 1491 married the King of France. Normandy, the French home of Norse invaders, also led a separate existence, and even brought England under its sway. In France's northernmost knob flourished Flanders, Picardy, and Artois. When the Revolution broke provinces into departments, Picardy, for instance, disappeared in the departments of Somme, Aisne, and Oise, all named for rivers. Normandy and Brittany each became five departments; Champagne was shattered into parts of ten.

A cluster of smaller provinces covered central France with such historic old titles as Lyonnais, Auvergne, Berry, Bourbonnais, Limousin and Touraine. Though Limousin (named for its famous old chinaware city of Limoges) dropped from maps before the machine age, it left its traces in the limousine's name.

A Province Surrounded by France, but Not French

The smallest of the ancient provinces was little Aunis, halfway down the Atlantic coast—until the Revolution, an island of Protestantism in Catholic France.

The province of Comtat-Venaissin, near Avignon, was practically not French at all, having been purchased from its feudal lords about 1275 for the use of the Popes. A half-century later, Pope Clement VI bought Avignon, too. During the papal exile from the Vatican, the Popes made their headquarters in this section of France, until 1403. For nearly 400 years thereafter, though surrounded by French territory, Avignon and Comtat-Venaissin were governed from the Vatican.

UMI

The heavy concentration of Mohammedans in southwest Asia and northern Africa arises from the fact that Arabia was the birthplace of Mohammed and the center from which his religion was spread. Mohammed's followers, representing a small sect in the early 7th century A.D., gradually expanded to cover the vast Moslem empires that once not only dominated much of the East but extended across North Africa and north into Europe itself by way of Spain. As the religious empire builders conquered succeeding territories by sword and Koran, they also acquired and spread new forms of knowledge, including sciences and arts previously unknown to Europe.

Note: Mention of the feast of Ramadan as celebrated by Moslems in Africa and the Near East can be found in "Trans-Africa Safari," in the *National Geographic Magazine*, September, 1938; and "Pageant of Jerusalem," December, 1927. Other Moslem customs are described in "Pilgrim's Progress to Mecca," November, 1937; and "An Unbeliever Joins the Hadj," June, 1934.

See also the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS for "Mecca Pilgrimage Ends Moslem Year," March 4, 1940; and "'Moslem World' Includes One of Every Ten Persons on Earth," November 14, 1938.

Bulletin No. 4, October 27, 1941.

Photograph by Lawrence Copley Thaw

THE END OF RAMADAN BRINGS THE BEGINNING OF FESTIVITIES

The new moon signifying the end of the fast-month of Ramadan is welcomed with all-night celebrations, and on the following day with such traditional spectacles as this mock duel, staged at the five-centuries-old desert city of Agadès, in French West Africa. The Tuaregs of Agadès, whose warriors wear veils, begin their mock battle mounted on speedy white dromedaries, then continue it on foot in hand-to-hand combat. For defense against the dueling swords, each performer carries a shield of tough camel hide. Veiled men watch from the sidelines (left), while women and children look on from the tower windows of mud houses (right).

The south of France was dominated by Gascogne and Guyenne, once the property of England, and the storied Mediterranean regions of Languedoc and Provence, beloved of the troubadours. Languedoc, or "Speech-of-Oc," was named because the people's southern accent pronounced "oc" for "yes" instead of the more familiar "oui" of the north. The Revolution made Languedoc into nine departments with such simple river names as Aude and Tarn.

Guyenne (the slurred and shortened form of Aquitaine) was the extensive duchy in the southwest that became English through Henry II's marriage with Eleanor of Aquitaine. This was the stronghold, too, of the Black Prince, who raided France and kidnapped the French King John. For a time the English crown ruled Guyenne, Gascony, Limousin, Poitou, Anjou, Touraine, Maine, and Saintonge, as well as Normandy.

Provence, receiving its name from the old Roman "Provincia" of Gaul, was the seat of a medieval culture to which the troubadours brought renown. Provençal customs, songs, and dress contribute to the picturesqueness of the French Riviera.

Note: *National Geographic Magazine* articles on France include: "France Farms As War Wages," February, 1940; "A Skyline Drive in the Pyrenees," October, 1937; "Normandy—Choice of the Vikings," May, 1936.

The National Geographic Society's Map of Europe and the Near East will help in the location of France's provinces. The Map, issued as a supplement to the May, 1940, *Magazine*, may be also obtained from the headquarters of the Society in Washington, D. C.

See also these GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS: "Vive La Republique! What Is the Name of France?," February 24, 1941; "What Is Left of France," October 14, 1940; "France's Lorraine Borderland a Perennial War Hostage," December 9, 1940.

Bulletin No. 5, October 27, 1941.

Photograph by Melville Chater

CARCASSONNE RECALLS THE DAYS WHEN FRANCE'S PROVINCES WERE YOUNG

While the country was torn by conflicts between rival dukes and princes, Carcassonne's walls were important in the defense of the southern province of Languedoc. In 1355 the Black Prince Edward of England, who was also lord of the neighboring province of Guyenne, raided Languedoc and burned the town below the fortress, but Carcassonne remained untouched. Visigoths began the fortifications, which defied Clovis. The local lords of Carcassonne resisted the King of France until it became the property of the Crown in 1239. The sturdy walls have been called a complete education in the art of fortification from the 5th century to the 14th. The town, with more than 25,000 inhabitants, stands in the river valley below the fort.